

**IN THE CLAIMS**

*Please amend the claims as follows:*

1. (Currently amended) A method for completing trades in a market for a commodity, the method comprising:
  - designating a non-trading central authority;
  - screening a plurality of entities to identify a plurality of authorized traders, the screening performed by the central authority having a registry of the plurality of authorized traders and a standardized sales contract having pre-approved terms;
  - submitting terms for trading the commodity from at least two traders of the plurality of authorized traders; and
  - entering into an agreement for a sales contract based upon the submitted terms of each trader of at least two traders of the plurality of authorized traders and the pre-approved terms of the standardized sales contract. and
  - ~~constructing a standardized sales contract for the commodity by the central authority in response to an input from each trader of at least two contracting traders of the plurality of authorized traders, if agreement is indicated by the input from each trader.~~
2. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein said screening further comprises: the central authority determining that an entity has sufficient resources to complete a minimum trade in order to identify the entity as an authorized trader of the plurality of authorized traders using the registry.
3. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

determining that the at least two contracting traders ~~are likely to have~~ sufficient resources to perform according to the sales contract using the registry.

4. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 3, further comprising:

paying a seller of the at least two contracting traders upon shipment of the commodity in accordance with the sales contract, said paying performed by a bonding authority electronically; and

collecting payment from a buyer of the at least two contracting traders in accordance with the sales contract, said collecting performed by the bonding authority.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein the bonding authority and the central authority are commonly owned.

6. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, before said ~~constructing~~ entering the sales contract, further comprising:

inputting an offer price by a first trader of the plurality of authorized traders;

inputting an irrevocable bid price in response to the offer price by a second trader of the plurality of authorized traders; and

indicating agreement for ~~constructing a~~ entering the sales contract if an acceptance price in response to the bid price is selected by the first trader.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 6, wherein the acceptance price and the bid price differ.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 7, wherein the acceptance price and the bid price differ by an amount in response to a freight cost for shipment of the commodity to a destination associated with a buyer of the at least two contracting traders.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 7, wherein the acceptance price and the bid price differ by an amount in response to a transaction fee retained by the central authority.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 7, wherein the acceptance price and the bid price differ by an amount in response to a transaction fee collected by a bonding authority.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 6, wherein:  
the offer price is a minimum selling price; and  
the bid price is a buying price.

12. (Original) The method of Claim 6, wherein:  
the offer price is a maximum buying price;  
and the bid price is a selling price.

13. (Original) The method of Claim 6 wherein the bid price is in response to a presented price, the presented price equal to the offer price corrected for at least one of a transaction fee and a freight cost.

14. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:  
paying a subscription fee to the central authority electronically by a trader of the plurality  
authorized traders.

15. (Original) The method of Claim 6, further comprising:  
presenting a plurality of offers from the plurality of authorized traders to the second  
trader by the central authority;  
selecting by the second trader a selected offer from the first trader among the plurality of  
offers, the selected offer including a presentation price responsive to the offer price; and  
if the second trader indicates to the central authority a bid is desired, constructing a bid  
associated with the second trader by the central authority in response to the selected offer and the  
bid price.

16. (Original) The method of Claim 6, further comprising:  
presenting a plurality of bids from the plurality of authorized traders to the first trader by  
the central authority; and  
selecting by the first trader a selected bid from the second trader among the plurality of  
bids if a sales contract is desired, the selected bid including the acceptance price.

17. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:  
requesting a change in the sales contract by a buyer of the at least two contracting traders;  
inputting by the buyer a new destination to which the commodity is shipped; and

if a seller of the at least two contracting traders accepts the change, constructing an amended sales contract in response to the new destination.

18. (Original) The method of Claim 8, further comprising computing the freight cost in response to a shipping rate retrieved from a database of shipping rates, each shipping rate associated with each destination of a plurality of destinations, the database associated with a seller of the at least two contracting traders.

19. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising storing information about the sales contract by the central authority in a transaction database.

20. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 19, further comprising:  
~~computing~~ calculating market trends or statistics from the information in the transaction database.

21. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 20, further comprising:  
distributing at least one of the market trends or the statistics to ~~a trader~~ at least one of the traders of the plurality of authorized traders.

22. (Original) The method of Claim 19 further comprising exporting the information in the transaction database to an accounting system of a contracting trader of the at least two contracting traders.

23. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the agreement is not ~~indicated~~ reached unless the ~~input~~ terms from each trader is received within a certain duration of time.

24. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the ~~constructing~~ entering the ~~standardized~~ sales contract includes ~~computing~~ calculating a contract price ~~in response~~ based upon the terms ~~input~~ from each trader and a freight cost for shipment of the commodity to a destination associated with a buyer of the at least two contracting traders.

25. (Original) The method of Claim 24, further comprising computing the freight cost in response to a shipping rate retrieved from a database of shipping rates, each shipping rate associated with each destination of a plurality of destinations, the database associated with a seller of the at least two contracting traders.

26. (Currently amended) A system for completing trades in a market for a commodity, the system comprising:

a network;

a client having one or more client processors configured for connecting to the network;

and

a server connected to the network, the server having a server memory medium storing information indicative of a plurality of authorized traders, and one or more server processors configured for determining whether the client is a trader client belonging to a trader of the plurality of authorized traders, for accepting ~~input~~ terms from the trader client, and for

~~constructing~~ entering into a ~~standardized~~ sales contract for the commodity ~~in response to~~  
~~input~~ based upon the terms from the trader client of each of at least two contracting traders, if the  
~~input terms~~ from the client of each trader indicates agreement.

27. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 26, the one or more server processors further configured for, before said ~~constructing~~ entering into the sales contract:

receiving an offer price from a first trader client of a plurality of trader clients;

if a bid is intended, receiving an irrevocable bid price in response to the offer price from a second trader client of the plurality of trader clients; and

if agreement is intended, receiving from the first trader client a selection of an acceptance price in response to the bid price indicating agreement for constructing a sales contract.

28. (Original) The system of Claim 27, the one or more server processors further configured for:

computing a presentation price in response to the offer price and at least one of a transaction fee and a freight cost;

constructing an offer in response to the presentation price;

computing an acceptance price in response to the irrevocable bid price and the at least one of the transaction fee the freight cost, and

constructing a bid in response to the acceptance price.

29. (Original) The system of Claim 28, wherein:

the one or more server processors are further configured for presenting a plurality of offers constructed for a plurality of trader clients to the second trader client; and

receiving a selection from the second trader client indicating the offer from the first trader client before said constructing the bid; and said constructing the bid is also responsive to the offer.

30. (Original) The system of Claim 28, wherein:

the one or more server processors are further configured for presenting a plurality of bids constructed for a plurality of trader clients to the first trader client; and

receiving a selection from the first trader client indicating the bid from the second trader client before said constructing the sales contract; and

said constructing the sales contract is also responsive to the bid.

31. (Original) The system of Claim 26, the one or more server processors are further configured for:

receiving a request for a change in the sales contract from a buyer of the at least two contracting traders;

presenting information in response to the request for change to a seller of the at least two contracting traders, and

if an indication of acceptance is received from the seller, constructing an amended sales contract in response to the request for change.

32. (Original) The system of Claim 31, wherein:



the request for change includes a new destination to which the commodity is shipped; and  
the information presented to the seller includes a new shipping rate to the new  
destination.

33. (Original) The system of Claim 26, wherein:  
the server memory medium stores a transaction database; and  
the one or more server processors are further configured for storing information from the  
sales contract in the transaction database.

34. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 33, wherein the one or more server  
processors are further configured for ~~computing~~ calculating market trends or statistics from the  
information in the transaction database.

35. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 34, wherein the one or more server  
processors are further configured for distributing the market trends or the statistics to a trader  
client.

36. (Original) The system of Claim 33, the one or more server processors further  
configured for sending contract information about the sales contract associated with the at least  
two contracting traders from the transaction database to a contracting client belonging to a  
contracting trader of the at least two contracting traders in a standard format.

37. (Original) The system of Claim 36, the one or more client processors on the contracting client further configured for storing the contract information in the standard format and for executing an accounting process that uses the contract information in the standard format.

38. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 26, wherein the ~~input~~ submitted terms from the client of each trader does not indicate agreement unless the ~~input~~ submitted terms from each trader client is received within a certain duration of time.

39. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 26, wherein:  
the server memory medium stores a shipping rate database, each shipping rate associated with each destination of a plurality of destinations, the database associated with a seller of the at least two contracting traders; and

~~constructing-preparing~~ the ~~standardized~~-sales contract includes ~~computing-calculating~~ a contract price in response to the ~~input~~ terms from the client of each trader and a rate retrieved from the shipping rate database.

40. (Original) The system of Claim 26, wherein:  
the network is the internet; and  
the one or more client processors are configured as an internet browser.

41. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 40, the one or more server processors are further configured for receiving the ~~input~~ submitted terms from the trader client through a web page.

42. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 41, the one or more server processors are further configured for presenting a web page to the trader client to prompt the trader for the ~~input~~ terms from the trader client.

43. (Currently amended) A method for using a computer to complete trades in a market for a commodity, the method comprising:

logging on to a server of a central authority which determines whether a user is a trader of a plurality of authorized traders;

~~entering input~~ submitting terms for a sales contract for a commodity onto the server; and

if the ~~input entered~~ submitted terms indicates agreement, then ~~constructing~~ entering into an agreement by computer ~~a standardized for the~~ sales contract for the commodity ~~in response to~~ based upon the ~~input~~ submitted terms of each of at least two contracting traders.

44. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 43, further comprising:

entering an offer price from a first trader of a ~~the~~ plurality of ~~trader~~ authorized traders;

if a bid is intended, entering an irrevocable bid price in response to the offer price from a second trader of the plurality of traders; and

if agreement is intended, selecting an acceptance price by the first trader in response to the bid price indicating agreement for constructing a sales contract.

45. (Original) The method of Claim 44, further comprising:  
viewing by the second trader a plurality of offers constructed for a plurality of traders; and  
selecting by the second trader the offer from the first trader; and

46. (Original) The method of Claim 44, further comprising:  
viewing by the first trader a plurality of bids constructed for a plurality of traders; and  
selecting by the first trader the bid from the second trader.

47. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 43, further comprising:  
requesting a change in the sales contract by a buyer of the at least two contracting traders;  
viewing information in response to the request for change by a seller of the at least two  
contracting traders, and  
indicating acceptance by the seller if ~~constructing~~ preparing an amended sales contract in  
response to the ~~desired~~ desired change ~~is desired~~.

48. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium for supporting trades in a  
market for a commodity, the medium bearing instructions for causing one or more processors to:  
determine whether a client process is a trader client belonging to a trader of the plurality  
of authorized traders;  
accept ~~input~~ terms from the trader client, and

~~construct~~prepare a ~~standardized~~ sales contract for the commodity in response to ~~input the~~  
terms from the trader client of each of at least two contracting traders, if the ~~input terms~~ from the  
client of each trader indicates agreement.

49. (Currently amended) The medium of Claim 48, the instructions for causing one or  
more processors to, before said ~~constructing~~preparing the sales contract:

receive an offer price from a first trader client of a plurality of trader clients;

if a bid is intended, receive an irrevocable bid price in response to the offer price from a  
second trader client of the plurality of trader clients; and

if agreement is intended, receive from the first trader client a selection of an acceptance  
price in response to the bid price indicating agreement for constructing a sales contract.

50. (Original) The medium of Claim 49, the instructions for causing one or more  
processors to further:

compute a presentation price in response to the offer price and at least one of a  
transaction fee and a freight cost;

construct an offer in response to the presentation price;

compute an acceptance price in response to the irrevocable bid price and the at least one  
of the transaction fee the freight cost, and

construct a bid in response to the acceptance price.

51. (Original) The medium of Claim 50, wherein:

the instructions cause one or more processors to further present a plurality of offers constructed for a plurality of trader clients to the second trader client; and

receive a selection from the second trader client indicating the offer from the first trader client before said constructing the bid; and

said construct the bid is also responsive to the offer.

52. (Original) The medium of Claim 50, wherein:

the instructions cause one or more processors to further present a plurality of bids constructed for a plurality of trader clients to the first trader client; and

receive a selection from the first trader client indicating the bid from the second trader client before said construct the sales contract; and

said construct the sales contract is also responsive to the bid.

53. (Original) The medium of Claim 48, the instructions for causing one or more processors to further:

receive a request for a change in the sales contract from a buyer of the at least two contracting traders;

present information in response to the request for change to a seller of the at least two contracting traders, and

if an indication of acceptance is received from the seller, construct an amended sales contract in response to the request for change.

54. (Currently amended) The medium of Claim 53, wherein:

the request for change includes a new destination to which the commodity is shipped[[:]]; and

the information presented to the seller includes a new shipping rate to the new destination.

55. (Original) The medium of Claim 48, wherein:

a memory medium stores a transaction database; and

the instructions further cause one or more processors to store information from the sales contract in the transaction database.

56. (Currently amended) The medium of Claim 55, wherein the instructions ~~for~~ further ~~causing~~ cause the one or more processors to ~~compute~~ calculate the market trends or the statistics from the information in the transaction database.

57. (Currently amended) The medium of Claim 56, wherein the instructions ~~for~~ further ~~causing~~ cause the one or more processors to distribute the market trends or the statistics to a trader client.

58. (Original) The medium of Claim 55, the instructions for further causing the one or more processors to send contract information about the sales contract associated with the at least two contracting traders from the transaction database, said information in a standard format, to a contracting client belonging to a contracting trader of the at least two contracting traders.

59. (Currently amended) The medium of Claim 48, wherein the ~~input-terms~~ from the client of each trader ~~does not indicate agreement~~are accepted unless the ~~input-terms~~ from each trader client is received within a certain duration of time.

60. (Currently amended) The medium of Claim 48, wherein:  
a memory medium stores a shipping rate database, each shipping rate associated with each destination of a plurality of destinations, the database associated with a seller of the at least two contracting traders[[:]]; and

~~construct~~prepare the ~~standardized~~ sales contract includes ~~compute~~calculating a contract price ~~in response to~~ based upon the ~~input-terms~~ from the client of each trader and a rate retrieved from the shipping rate database.

61. (Currently amended) The medium of Claim 60, the instructions for further causing the one or more processors to receive the ~~input-terms~~ from the trader client through a web page.

62. (Currently amended) The medium of Claim 61, the instructions for further causing the one or more processors to present a web page to the trader client to prompt the trader for the ~~input-terms~~ from the trader client.

63. (Original) A client computer for supporting trades in a market for a commodity, the client computer comprising:



a client memory medium for storing contract information about a sales contract for the commodity, the contract information received in a standard format from a server computer which constructed the sales contract; and

one or more client processors configured for executing an accounting process that uses the contract information in the standard format.

64. (Original) A computer-readable medium for supporting trades in a market for a commodity, the medium bearing instructions for causing one or more processors to:

store contract information about a sales contract for the commodity, the contract information received in a standard format from a server computer which constructed the sales contract; and

execute an accounting process that uses the contract information in the standard format.

65. (Withdrawn) A computer-readable medium bearing information for use by one or more processors supporting trades in a market for a commodity, the information comprising:

a field indicative of a seller of a plurality of authorized traders; and

a plurality of shipping rate records, each record associating one destination of a plurality of destinations to which the seller will ship with one or more shipping rates charged by the seller.

66. (Withdrawn) The computer-readable medium of Claim 65, the information further comprising a field indicating a major hub associated with a subset of the plurality of destinations.

67. (Withdrawn) The computer-readable medium of Claim 65, each record further comprising one or more transport modes corresponding to the one or more shipping rates.

68. (Withdrawn) The computer-readable medium of Claim 65, each shipping rate of the one or more shipping rates expressed as freight cost per unit commodity per load.

69. (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein the registry is an electronic database.

70. (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein the pre-approved contract terms include at least one of the following: type of commodity, amount of commodity desired to buy, amount of commodity desired to sell, and delivery method.

71. (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein the commodity is lumber, and the pre-approved contract terms further comprise:

seller account information;

species of the lumber;

thickness of the lumber;

width of the lumber;

length of the lumber;

trim or tally of the lumber;

surface type of the lumber;

moisture level of the lumber;

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grade of the lumber;

grade stamped of the lumber;

number of loads of the lumber;

transportation type;

date of shipping;

board footage; and/or

unit size of the lumber.